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Item 113 of the preliminary list*

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

Letter dated 24 February 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement issued on 19 February 1998 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the abolition of the death penalty in Azerbaijan.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 113 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) John WESTON
Permanent Representative of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland to the United Nations

* A/53/50.

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ANNEX

[Original: English and French]

Declaration issued on 19 February 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union on the abolition of the death penalty in Azerbaijan

The European Union welcomes the adoption by the parliament of Azerbaijan, on 10 February 1998, of a law abolishing the death penalty in Azerbaijan.

This is a significant step forward. The Union encourages Azerbaijan to persevere in strengthening democracy and the rule of law with a view to accession to the Council of Europe.

The Union reaffirms its support for the Council of Europe's position regarding the abolition of the death penalty and remains in favour of the abolition of the death penalty worldwide.